

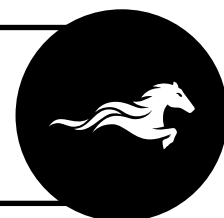


S P I R I T F O U N D A T I O N

Ground Breaking

Spirit Foundation announces new deal with Everton

Everton and Spirit Foundation Join Forces



The Spirit Foundation has significantly increased its long-standing commitment to Everton in the Community and Everton Free School and Football College with a multi-year £2million funding partnership.

The two new programmes of support will commence in July 2024 with the aim of creating a lasting impact for disadvantaged communities in Merseyside.

The groundbreaking multi-year deal was confirmed recently when Spirit founder, philanthropist and Evertonian, Professor Ian Kilbride, attended one of Everton in the Community's disability football sessions as well as visiting the Spirit Library at Everton Free School.

The Spirit Foundation will now financially support the charity's 14 disability teams and, in addition, will provide funding to Everton Free School to improve literacy levels, as well as supporting marginalised students in its Football College.

A long-standing friend and supporter of both organisations, The Spirit Foundation was founded in 1994 and is a non-profit foundation established to give back and support education, communities and wildlife projects.

Currently celebrating its **30th anniversary**, the Spirit Foundation has supported a wide array of Everton in the Community and Everton Free School projects and initiatives over many years, including the launch of a choir to combat social isolation across the Liverpool 4 district and, importantly, the establishment and building of a library within the Spellow Lane-based Everton Free School. The library has the simple, but important, objective of making literacy more accessible and engaging.

Within Everton in the Community, the £1million funding will see the Spirit Foundation become an Official Supporter of the charity's disability teams with the organisation's logo featured on all training wear. The Foundation's directors will also be involved and take an active interest in the programmes.

Established in 2000, Everton in the Community's disability programme has fourteen disabled teams that represent Everton Football Club and its charitable arm, including pan-disability and impairment specific teams, amputee, Down Syndrome, U13, U16 and both adult male and female pan-disability teams.

In addition to supporting Everton in the Community, the Spirit Foundation will also become an Official Supporter of Everton Free School and Football College with an additional £1m funding being provided to improve literacy via individualised literacy programmes for each student, as well as supporting young adults with educational needs in its Football College.

**Chairman and CEO of the Spirit Organisation
(www.spiritorganisation.com), Ian Kilbride, comments:**

"We have worked with both EitC and Everton Free School over many years, but it was the enthusiasm and vision of Sue Gregory, CEO of EitC, and Steven Baker OBE, CEO of The People's Learning Trust - of which Everton Free School and Football College is the founder -, that inspired us to join forces on two long term and quite unique projects.

"We are delighted to be the Official Partner of EitC's disability teams and the literacy development programme within EFS and we know that the combined £2m funding will have a meaningful impact. With our 30-year history of success in educational and community-based projects, the Spirit Foundation (www.spiritf.org) is perfectly placed to work even closer with EitC and EFS."

**Sue Gregory, Chief Executive Officer
for Everton in the Community, adds:**

"The Spirit Foundation and Ian Kilbride are long-standing supporters of our charity and its programmes. We are so appreciative that they have pledged their long-term commitment to our work through the sponsorship of our fourteen disability teams. These teams provide competitive footballing opportunities for children and adults, and we currently support more than 130 disabled footballers each year, some of whom also represent their country internationally. This funding will enable us to further develop our teams to ensure we are offering these opportunities to as many people as possible."

Steven Baker OBE, CEO of The People’s Learning Trust, adds:

“I am incredibly proud of the partnership that we have forged with The Spirit Foundation. Professor Kilbride has been a key supporter of Everton Free School and Football College for a number of years, helping us to tackle disadvantage and raise literacy outcomes for our students. This generous donation to the trust will allow us to continue our innovative work and research, and support even more children and young people across the region.”

Principal of Everton Free School, Claire Lamontagne added:

“Professor Ian Kilbride has been an ongoing supporter of Everton Free School and Football College since its inception 12 years ago. His philanthropy enabled the development of our school library, helping us to achieve fantastic outcomes for the students in our care. The Spirit Foundation’s ongoing support for our school is testimony to its commitment to tackle disadvantage for children and young people in Merseyside, who often face daily challenges in their lives.”

As the charitable arm of Everton Football Club, Everton in the Community is committed to transforming lives and creating positive change in the communities it serves. Established in 1988, the ground-breaking charity has become a powerful force for good; harnessing the unifying power of football to drive social change and address societal challenges across Liverpool City Region.

And in 2012, Everton in the Community created history when it became the first Club-Community scheme in the country to be awarded funding by the government to open a free school; a ground-breaking initiative for young people across Merseyside.

Everton Free School caters for young people aged 13-16 and offers an alternative education pathway to those where traditional methods in mainstream schools have failed. The college offers an ‘open’ sixth form and attracts many 16-19-year old students who choose to study sport in the environment and surroundings of a renowned Premier League football club at Spellow Lane, Vauxhall Motors Football Club, Jericho Lane and Bridge Chapel.